

In the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please substitute the current version of paragraph [0001] with the following paragraph:

[0001] This application is a divisional of, and claims priority to, Application No. 09/148,503, filed on September 4, 1998. Application No. 09/148,503 claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/057,655, filed on September 5, 1997, and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/093,297, filed on July 17, 1998. The entire contents of each of these applications are herein incorporated by reference.

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Please cancel claims 1-32 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add the following claims:

33. (New) A method of assessing an individual's risk of developing AD comprising isotyping a blood tissue or cell sample taken from an individual, wherein said sample comprises α_2M , to determine whether said sample contains the α_2M-2 variant.

34. (New) The method of claim 33, further comprising drawing a conclusion regarding said individual's risk of developing Alzheimer's disease based on the existence of the α_2M-2 variant in said sample, wherein a finding that said sample contains said α_2M-2 isoform indicates that said individual is at risk for developing AD.

35. (New) The method of claim 33, further comprising isotyping said sample to determine whether said sample contains the α_2M-1 variant.